

**California Biodiversity Council/Southwest Strategy
Tour and Meeting Agenda
March 13 - 14, 2002
Yuma, Arizona**

Wednesday, March 13

8:00 am Leave Inn Suites Hotel

9:00 am Arrive at Imperial Wildlife Refuge for Colorado River Jet Boat Tour
State and federal agency representatives will be on hand to discuss issues of wildlife refuges and the Multi-Species Conservation Plan among others.

The Imperial National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1941 to protect and preserve all forms of plant and animal life found in the lower Colorado River region. Located 40 miles Northeast of Yuma, refuge lands are situated in both Arizona and California. It is 30 miles long and encompasses 25,625 acres and protects two unique environments - the desert and the Colorado River ecosystem. The refuge is an excellent site for such activities as hiking, sightseeing and photography.

11:00 am Arrive at Squaw Lake Campground/Depart Boat/Lunch
The jet boats will stop at the Squaw Lake dock. Attendees should take all belongings from boat – after lunch they will reboard the buses.

Squaw Lake Campground is a RV and tent camping site. It has a boat launch, and day use area on a backwater of the Colorado River directly above Imperial Dam. The site provides opportunities for camping hiking swimming, fishing, boating, and picnicking, and has direct boat access to the Colorado River. Wildlife includes numerous waterfowl, as well as quail, coyotes, and reptiles.

12:30 pm Travel to Colorado/Gila River Confluence
Attendees interested in a 1.5-hour canoe trip will depart here. Those who do not wish to canoe may join a discussion of the Yuma area at the Yuma Crossing Park. Please indicate on the registration form if you would like to take part in the canoe trip. Both trips will meet up at Madison Park at 3:30pm

The Colorado River is relatively shallow throughout the Yuma Crossing East/West Wetlands area is the subject of several proposed Bureau of Reclamation sediment removal projects. Historic channels were deeper and contained backwater areas with suitable habitat for native fish and wildlife. Native habitat loss is an overall issue and concern. Sediment deposition that occurred with the 1993 Gila River flood, destruction of

lower terrace habitat in a 1996 fire, and extensive off-road use of portions of the upper terrace have all served to deplete the native vegetative and wildlife communities. Continued gullying and erosion create an unsafe physical environment and contribute to sedimentation along this stretch of the Colorado River.

3:30 pm Arrive at Madison/Gateway Park for Colorado River Overview
Jim Cherry, Lower Colorado Region, Bureau of Reclamation, will present an overview of the Colorado River.

The citizens of Yuma started Gateway Park in the mid-1990s. After clearing out the vegetation along the river at the end of Madison Avenue, they developed a beach and small grassy picnic area. Overall, \$1 million is allocated to improvements to the park, which will be both historic and recreational. Gateway Park will serve as an interpretation point for all the historical crossings.

4:30 pm West Wetlands Tour
Roger Blakeley and Charlie Flynn (City of Yuma, Department of Parks and Recreation) will meet the buses at the West Wetlands for a tour of the restoration projects and a discussion of the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area.

The Yuma East and West Wetlands projects encompass approximately 1,100 acres with the primary goal of developing and improving recreational areas along the waterfront, as well as reclaiming the area for native vegetation, fish, and wildlife. A lower, terrace/riparian zone immediately adjacent to the Colorado River and an upper, heavily impacted terrace zone characterize the Yuma West Wetlands project area.

5:30 pm Arrive back at Inn Suites
In preparation for dinner, folks will have a chance to change/freshen-up after the field trip. The buses will depart again for dinner at 6:45pm.



6:45 pm Leave Inn Suites
Buses will depart promptly at 6:45pm from the entrance of the Inn Suites.

7:00 pm Hors d'oeuvres, dinner, and entertainment at Old St. Paul's Church
Entertainment provided by the Yuma City Orchestra.

9:30 pm End of Day

Thursday, March 14

Yuma Inn Suites Hotel

8:00 am Opening Remarks, Missions, and History Overview of the California Biodiversity Council and Southwest Strategy

Opening Remarks: Mike Anable, Arizona State Lands Commissioner and Co-chair, Southwest Strategy; Mary D. Nichols, Secretary for Resources, California Resources Agency and; Co-Chair, California Biodiversity Council; Mike Pool, California State Director, Bureau of Land Management and Co-Chair, California Biodiversity Council

Missions and History Overview: Christine Nota, Regional Forester's Representative, USDA Forest Service, Region 5 and CBC Executive Committee Chair; Bill Maxon, Executive Director, Southwest Strategy

9:00 am Colorado River Management Issues
Moderator: Reese Fullerton, New Mexico Consensus Council

Jerry Zimmerman, Executive Director, Colorado River Board
Colorado River History and Law

Sam Spiller, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Overview of the Lower Colorado Multi-Species Conservation Plan

Daniel Eddy Jr., Chair Colorado River Indian Tribes
Tribal issues related to the Colorado River

Mike Pierce, Arizona Department of Water Resources (Retired)
Arizona's issues with management of the Colorado River and the MSCP

Jeff Kightlinger, Los Angeles Metropolitan Water District
California's Water Transfer Program, the Quantification Settlement Agreement

Discussion among panel, CBC, and SWS – what's next?

10:30 am Break

10:45 am Management of the Salton Sea
Moderator: Reese Fullerton, New Mexico Consensus Council

Mike Walker, Lower Colorado Region, Bureau of Reclamation
Charlie Pelizza, Wildlife Biologist, Sonny Bono Salton Sea Refuge

John Redlinger, Deputy Manager, Boulder Canyon Operations Office, Bureau of Reclamation

Gary Wyatt, District 4 Supervisor, Imperial County Board of Supervisors

Discussion among panel, CBC, and SWS – what's next?

12:00 Adjourn

Optional Field Trips

Thursday, March 14

Ocotillo Wells – 1:00 to 5:00pm (CA State Parks)

California State Parks is organizing a field trip to Ocotillo Wells after the meeting discussions have ended on Thursday March 14. Ocotillo Wells is adjacent to Anza–Borrego Desert State Park with over 42,000 acres of desert terrain, from below sea level to 400–foot elevations. Please contact Erin Klaesius to sign up for this trip by March 6: 916.227.2661 or erin_klaesius@fire.ca.gov.

Sears Point – 1:00 to 6:00pm (Yuma BLM)

BLM Yuma Field Office will offer two field trips to Sears Points Archaeological District (See Friday AM). This 3,000–acre area consists of a wide array of archaeological sites including sleeping circles, intaglios and rock alignments, lithic and ceramic scatters, shrines and cairns, aboriginal trails, and most notably, hundreds of petroglyph panels. Box lunches will be available for \$6.00 each. To register, contact Lori Cook by March 6 at 928.317.3243.

Friday, March 15

Sears Point – 8:00am to 2:00pm (Yuma BLM)

See Sears Point Archaeological Area description above. Contact Lori Cook by March 6 at 928.317.3243.

SWS Agriculture Field Trip – 8:30am to 1:00pm

Hosted by NRCS District Conservationist, Ms. Bobby McDermott, this trip will depart the Yuma Inn Suites en route to the Gila Valley Farming Community. Further stops include Dole plant and no-host lunch with Conservation District Supervisors at Chretins Restaurant regarding the international Produce industry. To register, contact Linda Franks by March 6 at 505.248.6882.